

MAYOR OF LONDON

Tony Arbour AM

Chairman of the London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

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London Assembly (Plenary) Meeting 8 June 2016 - Motions

Thank you for your letter of 13 June about the motions agreed at the London Assembly (plenary) meeting on 8 June 2016. Please see my response to the motions below.

Motion 1 – Foreign investment in London's housing market

The Assembly rightly pointed to my concerns that too many homes in London appear to be sold off-plan to overseas investors and left empty. I want to make sure that Londoners get the benefit of as many of the new homes we build as possible, and I have asked officers to bring forward a range of options.

The Assembly asked me to examine the extent to which properties owned by overseas investors are kept empty or unused, and to commission research into the effects of overseas investment on the price, affordability and supply of homes across London as a matter of urgency. I will consider both of these requests as part of developing policy on this important issue.

Motion 2 – Providing shelter to refugees

With millions of Syrian refugees in desperate need, I welcome the Government's commitment to resettle up to 20,000 Syrian refugees over the course of this Parliament. Like so many Londoners, I want London to play its full part in supporting Syrian refugees to rebuild their lives here in the capital.

London has so much to offer: a proud history of welcoming refugees and migrants from all over the world; hundreds of community organisations and specialist services with a wealth of expertise in supporting refugees; a strong economy with unrivalled employment opportunities; and so many individuals, communities and businesses who want to help.

London is facing a housing crisis, and the lack of available and affordable housing makes it very challenging to secure appropriate accommodation and provide sustainable resettlement for refugees – even with the incredible goodwill of so many individuals and organisations across the city.

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That a number of London local authorities have already moved to resettle Syrian refugees despite these challenges is to their great credit, but we know that delivering sustainable resettlement in London at any significant scale will require more support from Government.

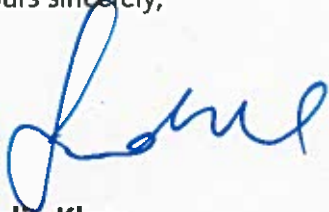
I want to work with London's local authorities, communities, charities and businesses to ensure that we can play our full part as a city, and sustainably resettle Syrian refugees in London. I want Syrian refugees to be able to rebuild their lives in London safe in the knowledge that, after everything that they have been through, they have found a stable and secure place they can call home. But we must do this in a way that recognises the unique challenges London faces and that includes appropriate Government funding for London.

I have written to the Minister for Syrian refugees, Richard Harrington, setting out this position and will share any response I receive with you. In the meantime, local authority colleagues managing London's rota for unaccompanied asylum seeking children are also engaged in discussions with Government on new local authority processes for supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children. I hope that we will be able to work together to ensure we can play our full part as a city, and provide a sustainable offer of support to refugees in need of our assistance.

Motion 3 – NHS bursaries

Thank you for raising the issue of nurse bursaries with me. The Department of Health is currently consulting formally on this matter and I shall be responding to this consultation. My officer will be liaising with yours to explore a joint response with the Assembly and its health committee.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London